

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After the foregoing Amendment, claims 1, 3-11, 13-15 and 17 are currently pending in this application. Claims 2, 12 and 16 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 11 and 15 have been amended to incorporate the features recited in the canceled claims 2, 12 and 16, respectively, which were indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by the amendment herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 2-4, 6-10, 12 and 16 contain allowable subject matter.

The allowable subject matter of dependent claim 2 has been incorporated into independent claim 1. Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3-5 are allowable over the prior art of record.

The allowable subject matter of dependent claim 12 has been incorporated into independent claim 11. Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claim 11 and dependent claims 13 and 14 are allowable over the prior art of record.

The allowable subject matter of dependent claim 16 has been incorporated into independent claim 15. Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claim 15 and dependent claim 17 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 2 because of various informalities in the claim. Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice, and the features therein have been incorporated into claim 1 without the informalities pointed out by the Examiner. The withdrawal of the objection to the claim 2 is respectfully requested.

Applicant: Roy et al.
Application No.: 10/686,327

Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1, 2-11, 13-15 and 17, is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Roy et al.

By Scott Wolinsky
Scott Wolinsky
Registration No. 46,413
(215) 568-6400

Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
United Plaza, Suite 1600
30 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Telephone: (215) 568-6400
Facsimile: (215) 568-6499

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